Safety measures and directives are adopted in the ammunition factories in accordance with prescribed manuals and the advice of experts. Besides, regular training programmes are conducted on safety for all employees. General safety directives are explained to each employee in the work area.

Non-lethal Equipment for Army

1524. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the demand of Army Headquarters placed sometime in 1993 for modern non-lethal equipment to enhance counter-insurgency operations has not been met so far;

(b) if so, what are the difficulties in meeting the equipment demand to counter insurgency in various parts of the country; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to procure the requisite equipment for the army?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A proposal from Army Headquarters, received in 1996, for procurement of non-lethal weapon system is under consideration of the Ministry, in consultation with different related agencies. The proposal, orginally received, was for procurement of the system from a single foreign vendor. Our Defence/Military Attaches, abroad, have been requested to identify more sources to generate competition. Simultaneously, development and procurement of the system from indigenous sources is also being considered.

Appraisal of IAF management system

1525. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of late, there has been growing dissatisfaction and unrest often leading to indiscipline in the Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any critical appraisal of the IAF management system to identify the causes for such a situation;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what measures have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) According to Air Hqrs it is not true that there is growing dissatisfaction and unrest leading to indiscipline in Indian Air Force as such. However, some service personnel and their families showed resentment against recommendations of V Pay Commission.

(b) and (c) The main demands of IAF personnel were for the rationalisation of allowances and pay scales and for review of V Central Pay Commission awards, for different branches of the Indian Air Force, as apprised to the Government.

(d) A Committee helped by Defence Secretary has since looked into all these aspects, and made recommendations which are under consideration of the Government.

गुजरात में सेवानिवृत्त रक्षा कर्मचारी

1526. **श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे:** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) गुजरात राज्य में सेवानिवृत्त रक्षा कर्मचारियों को क्या-क्या मौलिक और प्राथमिक सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराई जा रही हैं;

(ख) क्या उनके उत्थान के लिए कोई कल्याण कोष की स्थापना की गई है;

(ग) क्या उनकी सेवाओं को ध्यान में रखते हुए उन्हें प्रदान की जा रही सुविधाएं पर्याप्त नहीं हैं; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार सुविधाओं में वृद्धि करने पर विचार कर रही है?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जॉर्ज फर्नांडीज़): (क) से (घ) भूतपूर्व सैनिकों का पुनर्वास एवं कल्याण, केन्द्र एवं राज्य

सरकारों की संयुक्त जिम्मेवारी मानी गई है। भूतपूर्व सैनिकों के पुनर्वास एवं कल्याण के लिए केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकारों के पास कई योजनाएं हैं जैसे केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकारों तथा उनके सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों/ राष्ट्रीय-कृत बैंकों की नौकरियों में आरक्षण देना, स्वरोजगार योजनाएं, प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं के वास्ते आयु सीमा एवं शैक्षणिक योग्यता में छूट देना, सिविल में नौकरियों के लिए उन्हें तैयार करने हेतु प्रशिक्षण देना, चिकित्सा सुविधाएं, कैंटीन सुविधाएं, वीरता पुरस्कार विजेताओं एवं युद्ध में शहीद हुए सैनिकों की पत्नियों को यात्रा रियायतें देना, युद्ध के कारण असहाय हुए सैनिकों तथा युद्ध अथवा युद्ध जैसी कार्रवाई में शारीरिक रूप से अशक्त हो गए कार्मिकों की संतानों को शैक्षिक रियायत देना आदि।

2. भूतपूर्व सैनिकों की कल्याण संबंधी योजनाओं का वित्त पोषण सशस्त्र सेना झंडा दिवस की निधि, जिसका हिसाब-हिसाब केन्द्र सरकार रखती है तथा राज्य सरकारों के कल्याण निधियों से किया जाता है। गुजरात की राज्य सरकार भूतपूर्व सैनिकों के कल्याण के लिए एकीकृत निधि, दातव्य निधि तथा जवान कल्याण निधि रख रही है।

3. भूतपूर्व सैनिकों को मुहैया कराई जाने वाली सुविधाओं और रियायतों की समीक्षा समय-समय पर केन्द्रीय सैनिक बोर्ड तथा राज्य सैनिक बोर्डों की बैठकों में की जाती है।

State-wise distribution of vacancies

1527. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to change the present system of distribution of vacancies in Defence Services State-wise, in proportion to the population of States; and

(b) if so, whether all the political parties and Chief Ministers have been consulted in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs

1528. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering providing reservation to SCs/STs and OBCs in the Defence services; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Voting right of Defence personnel

1529. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the 18 lakh army soldiers and officers are deprived of their political right to cast their vote during general elections, but for the efficacy of the postal ballot system; and

(b) if so, whether the Chief of Army staff has suggested proxy voting for the army-personnel; and

(c) if so, the Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A proposal for introducing the system of proxy voting for the defence personnel and the adult members of their families living with them, is under the consideration of the Government.

War-vessels of Indian Navy

1530. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only five large warships, out of 18 war vessels in Indian Navy, are in operational state today; if not, what is the present status;